

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 12 are pending in the application. Claims 13 – 18 have been cancelled.

Applicants affirm their election of Group I., claims 1 – 12, drawn to a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory, classified in class 705, subclass 28.

Claims 1 – 12 stand rejected under Noori, Production and Operations Management, McGraw-Hill, Inc. (1995), pp 422-601. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 1, relates to a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory. The method includes obtaining at least one outstanding customer order, determining a current state of an available inventory of at least one material from a plurality of material sources, and periodically generating a work schedule and a material delivery schedule for producing the item using the at least one outstanding customer order and the current state of the available inventory. Each outstanding customer of the at least one outstanding customer order includes an item ordered by a customer, and producing the item requires a required quantity of a required material. The determining the current state of the available inventory is performed such that the determining the current state of the available inventory is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule. The obtaining the at least one outstanding customer order is performed such that the obtaining the customer order is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule.

Noori includes a plurality of chapters relating to various aspects of production and operations management. For example, Noori, Chapter 13 is titled “Managing Inventories: Independent Demand Systems”, Noori, Chapter 14 is titled “Aggregate Planning”, Noori, Chapter 15 is titled “Material Requirements Planning”, Noori, Chapter 16 is titled “Just-In-Time and Synchronous Operations”, and Noori, Chapter 17 is titled “Upstream-Downstream Materials Management”.

Noori does not teach or suggest a method for scheduling work and delivery of material for mass-producing items in a factory where such a method includes obtaining at least one outstanding customer order, determining a current state of an available inventory of at least one material from a plurality of material sources, and periodically generating a work schedule and a material delivery schedule for producing the item using the at least one outstanding customer order and the current state of the available inventory. Much less such a method in which each outstanding customer order of the at least one outstanding customer order includes an item ordered by a customer, and producing the item requires a required quantity of a required material, the determining the current state of the available inventory is performed such that the determining the current state of the available inventory is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule, and the obtaining the at least one outstanding customer order is performed such that the obtaining the customer order is completed immediately prior to the generating the work schedule and the material delivery schedule, all as required by independent claim 1. Claims 2 – 11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

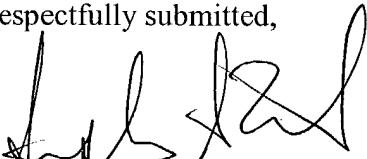
The claims have been amended to improve clarity. In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria VA 22313-1450 on March 1, 2004.

Attorney for Applicant(s)

3/1/04
Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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